

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

## APPLICATION FOR UNITED STATES PATENT

Packet ContainerBACKGROUND

09-28-04  
[0001] This application is a continuation-in-part of U.S. Patent Application Ser. No. 09/730,282, filed December 5, 2000, now Patent No. 6,360,916.

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10072463.020702  
[0002] The present invention relates to individual serving condiment packages and a method and apparatus for arranging and packing such individual serving condiment packages into a container.

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[0003] Individual serving packets, such as those used for catsup or other condiments in fast-food restaurants, are known. Typically, such packets are formed of two opposed sheets of plastic, sealed at the edges and filled with the condiment. An example of a particularly functional individual serving packets is described in U.S. Patent Application Ser. No. 09/730,282, co-invented by the present inventors and assigned to the present assignee. The disclosure of this application is incorporated herein by reference.

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[0004] Individual serving packets are typically sold and/or shipped to the fast-food restaurant or store in larger containers. Such larger containers take a wide variety of forms, such as clear plastic bags, paper cartons, etc. The individual serving packages are packed into the larger container in a variety of manners, including parallel straight rows and sometimes in a random manner.

[0005] The prior art does not, however, adequately address the problem of how to pack a plurality of individual serving packets in a container in a manner that is easy to use, simple and efficient, and aesthetically pleasing.